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Sent: Wednesday, February 16, 2022 9:27 PM
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Subject: Strategic Update - 2022 02 16

STRATEGIC UPDATES FOR DEPUTY SOLICITOR GENERAL

The information in this report is current to 2022-02-16 at 2100 hours.

Opposition to Public Health Measures

No incidents to report.

ASSESSMENT

Currently, there is no specific, identified threat and monitoring remains attuned to where ideologically motivated extremism may manifest among participants in or supporters of opposition activities.

Weapons Theft (Peterborough)

Police Reporting

Peel Regional Police reported the recovery of the trailer and a large quantity of the .22 calibre long guns stolen from a Peterborough commercial yard early Sunday morning. Stakeholders remain engaged in an active investigation. There is no information at this time to suggest any connection between theft and the Freedom Convoy 2022.

Freedom Convoy 2022

On February 14, 2022, the federal government invoked the *Emergencies Act* to provide additional powers to handle ongoing blockades and protests against pandemic restrictions. PM Trudeau said the measures will be geographically targeted and time limited. A cabinet declaration of emergency is in effect immediately and must be presented to Parliament within seven days. If either the Commons or the Senate votes against the motion, the emergency declaration would be revoked.

Ottawa Demonstrations

Police Reporting

On February 16, 2022 (today), Ottawa Police Service (OPS) and OPP police officers circulated and explained the *Ottawa Police Service Notice to Demonstration Participants*, that can be viewed [here](#). The Notice advises protestors to leave the area, that anyone blocking or assisting in blocking streets is committing a criminal offence, and it further advises of the various consequences arising from any unlawful activity associated with the protest under the Criminal Code and Emergencies Act. OPS and OPP reporting note reactions from protestors to the Notice has ranged from polite acceptance to outright inflammatory responses, with the overall sentiment being one of non-compliance. In some instances protestors refused to acknowledge the notice as having any force in law. As the day

progressed OPP reported an increase in hostility, particularly with the protestors at the Coventry location. OPP PLT were unsuccessful in entering the Coventry location due to officer safety concerns.

OPP located a “No Trespassing” written notice using pseudo-legal notice advising police officers they are prohibited from trespassing and that protestors may use force against them. This is in line with previous reporting that indicated some participants espoused sovereign citizen ideals.

OPP police information reports some participants have taken further steps to remove or conceal their licence plates.

OPS reporting notes approximately 450 trucks in the downtown core.

A group of Ottawa Freedom Convoy 2022 participants that departed yesterday to attend southern Ontario advised they intend to return to Ottawa today. OPP are engaging with the group to advise that, per provisions granted under the *Emergencies Act*, their return is now unlawful.

Greater Sudbury Police Service and North Bay Police Service each advised of a small support convoy heading to Ottawa. The support convoy appears to have originated out-of-province and was located in Sudbury through an open social media page “Hard Hats for Freedom” which was additionally linked to a private Facebook Group, “Trades Support Truckers”. This private group has 15,000 members.

OPP has been monitoring a convoy that left Ayr, Ontario at 1849hrs today, and is now heading eastbound on Hwy 401. The organizers informed OPP of their intentions to travel at 90km/hr, with their final destination being Ottawa. The convoy consists of 12 commercial motor vehicles and 9 passenger vehicles.

Open Source Reporting

Social media information and police reporting indicates that protestors viewed the resignation of the Ottawa Police Chief and the lifting of some provincial requirements for vaccine passports as victories.

Protest organizers and participants continue to express displeasure at the invocation of the *Emergencies Act* in social media and in interviews.

The fundraising campaigns for the Freedom Convoy and Adopt a Trucker are no longer on the GiveSendGo platform. The funds raised to date were effectively frozen as a result of the court order as financial institutions are prohibited from dealing with the GiveSendGo funds. GiveSendGo has publicly indicated their intent not to comply with the order and deny the Ontario courts jurisdiction over their fund. Bitcoin wallet for the blockade can no longer be accessed online. Its last available value was \$1.2M CAD.

Toronto Demonstrations

Police Reporting

Out of an abundance of caution, Queen’s Park Circle remains closed to vehicle traffic. All other road closures have been reopened.

Open Source

A video posted to the Freedom Convoy 2022 group on February 16, 2022 issued "A Call to Action" asking for participants to come to Ottawa to increase support numbers. Alternatively, supporters who cannot travel to Ottawa are encouraged to attend Toronto, and interested individuals are advised they can private message the group to make arrangements. Local actions towards blocking MP's offices and buildings (City Halls) were also encouraged. The message included information on how to interact with police if enforcement should commence (Note: this was posted prior to the OPS Notice to Demonstration Participants being issued).

A counter-protest banner drop action has been organized for Toronto. The group page "#KKKConvoyGoHome" provided the following details: Saturday, February 19, 2022, at 15:00 hours, at the Don Valley Parkway Pedestrian Bridge near (450 Broadview Avenue).

Ports of Entry - Windsor

Police Reporting

Ambassador Bridge is fully open. Canada-bound and US-bound traffic is flowing freely.

An individual was identified for threatening the Mayor of Windsor and charges are pending for uttering threats.

Open Source

Information is circulating that the protestors are waiting for the injunction to expire before re-gathering. Windsor PS are looking to extend the injunction.

Ports of Entry – Niagara / Queenston-Lewiston Bridge

Police Reporting

The QEW has been opened at Gilmore Road. No issues were reported.

Unconfirmed social media information from TPS Intelligence identified a potential convoy to take the Queenston, Lewiston Bridge on February 19, 2022.

Ports of Entry – Sarnia

Police Reporting

Highway 402 is open. 26 tractors and 4 quarry trucks remain on a nearby private farm property on Forest Road.

OPP reporting indicates that traffic is moving normally at the Blue Water Bridge.

Ports of Entry – Nipigon

Police Reporting

OPP reporting has identified a potential blockade at the Nipigon River Bridge scheduled for February 26, 2022.

Ports of Entry – Fort Frances

Police Reporting

OPP arrested a lone demonstrator who was obstructing traffic 300 meters from the border. No other issues reported.

Coutts, Alberta Blockade

As of February 15, 2022, the blockade at the Coutts, Alberta, border was cleared and traffic has resumed crossing the border.

Other Potential Activity

OPP reporting indicates that a group of people have travelled to possibly block the border at Pigeon River, and appear to be camping on site. Their intention is unclear.

Open Source Reporting

Social media information indicates that farmers from the Thunder Bay area intend to block bridges and border crossings with 1000 tractors. The message also claims that they are going to a border crossing with 5,000 vehicles, including commercial motor vehicles. The border point is not named: it is possible that Pigeon River is the destination.

Local convoy actions are anticipated in other jurisdictions across the province, please see the updated event schedule for additional information.

Social media information has called for peaceful protests in other jurisdictions that have provided police personnel to Ottawa.

Media reporting indicates that commercial truck drivers in the US are planning to begin their own convoys.

ASSESSMENT

The ‘Notice to Demonstration Participants’ effectively deemed the blockade action unlawful and outlined a number of legal consequences for both participants and supporters. While reactions from participants have ranged from polite to inflammatory, some also reflected elements of sovereign citizen ideology. The presence of this kind of ideologically motivated extremism raises the potential for conflict and presents an officer safety risk. It also suggests some participants believe they are exempt from enforcement actions on private property which could raise the potential for barricaded-persons scenarios. The potential for protest participants to be armed, as well as the availability of heavy equipment, poses a additional public safety risks as some participants may become inspired to act on account of a real or perceived deteriorating position.

Notably, there has been a downturn in social media posts of relevance and it appears fewer protest actions are being shared through open channels. While this could suggest interest in

the 'Freedom' movement is waning, there are early indicators that organizers are instead moving to platforms and modes of communication that are outside the reach of law enforcement. A heightened awareness to the possibility that protests and/or actions will erupt elsewhere in the province with a view to overwhelm or strain law enforcement. This potential may increase in light of the recent changes which effectively deem the Ottawa blockade and support to the blockade unlawful.

Protestors are likely to frame the federal government invocation of the *Emergencies Act* as a sign of government weakness, proof of government "tyranny", an escalation to violence, and an acknowledgement that the blockades have been successful. A recurring theme in their messaging is of having been infiltrated and of potential false flag operations against them by the government. Protestors at the ongoing blockade are likely to remain defiant, and solidarity protests are likely to continue elsewhere.

Police reporting for several days has indicated that the attitude toward police at the Ottawa blockade has become more adversarial and confrontational. The available reporting indicates a growing number of counter protests, including incidents where convoys are physically blocked by individuals or small groups. Such counter protests are likely to continue. These counter protests could increase the threat of conflict at protest sites, and raise the possibility of injury to individuals who place themselves in the way of vehicles.

Protest organizers are attributing the lifting of restrictions in some provinces to their protests. This perceived success will likely result in a hardened resolve amongst the protestors and their supporters. Additionally, organizers have stated an intent to hold blockades in provinces that have not dropped COVID-19 related mandates; it is almost certain that this will occur.

At this juncture, there is no concrete, specific, or credible threat with regard to the Freedom Convoy protest and Operation BearHug 2.0 activity. However, the possibility that a lone actor or group of individuals could enact a physical threat with little or no warning cannot be excluded.

EVENT SCHEDULE

February 15, 2022 – February 18, 2022

Freedom Convoy 2022 – **Fort McMurray to Ottawa**

February 16, 2022

Hard Hats for Freedom **Sudbury to Arnprior to Ottawa**

February 16, 2022 – February 17, 2022

Trades Support Truckers **Sault Ste. Marie to Arnprior to Ottawa**

U/K number of attendees, departing Sault Ste. Marie to join the Hard Hats for Freedom

February 19, 2022

Alberta Freedom Convoy 2022

Attempting to fill a charter bus to Ottawa

Locations and timing U/K

Pickups in Red Deer, Calgary, Medicine Hat, Swift Current and Regina

Toronto

Possible planned protest at Queens Park at 1200 and counter-protest banner drop on the Don Valley Parkway.

Cornwall

Possible planned protest to take place on February 19, 2022, time U/K

Windsor

Possible planned protest to take place at the Windsor Waterfront.

Niagara Peninsula Convoy 2022

Potential target of is the Peace Bridge/Queenston-Lewiston via slow roll/blockade.

Haldimand- Norfolk

Possible protest at 1030 hours, exact location U/K

Hamilton

Freedom of Choice Rally, estimated 50-200 persons attending

Saturday February 26, 2022

Nipigon Bridge

Protest was scheduled for 13 February has been rescheduled for February 26, 2022

U/K Date

Thunder Bay

Canada Unity – Operation Bearhug Canada

Strategic Border crossing disruptions. Plans unconfirmed.

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